

AGENDA: September 2, 2003

5.2

CATEGORY: Public Hearing

DEPT.: Community Development

TITLE: Historic Preservation Permit—
696 California Street

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt A RESOLUTION DENYING AN HISTORIC PRESERVATION PERMIT TO REMOVE A SINGLE-FAMILY HOME AT 696 CALIFORNIA STREET FROM THE CITY'S REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES, to be read in title only, further reading waived.

FISCAL IMPACT—None.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Project Description

This item was originally scheduled for the June 24, 2003 City Council meeting but was postponed to September 2, 2003 to allow the applicant time to submit additional information.

The applicant, Paulette Spencer, is requesting an Historic Preservation Permit to remove the single-family home at 696 California Street from the City's Register of Historical Resources ("Register"). The Register was adopted by the City Council in April 2002 in conjunction with the Interim Urgency Ordinance for the Preservation of Historical Resources. The applicant is not proposing any development project at this time.

The property is zoned P(19), Downtown Precise Plan Area F, which permits a maximum of seven multiple-family residential units. This is based on the sliding residential density scale of the Downtown Precise Plan. The General Plan designation for this property is Downtown Commercial.

Interim Urgency Ordinance for Preservation of Historical Resources

On April 23, 2002, the City Council adopted an Interim Urgency Ordinance for the Preservation of Historical Resources and the accompanying Register of Historical Resources. The Interim Ordinance sunsets in April 2004. The Interim Ordinance also provides a process for property owners who request to add or remove their property from the City's Register.

For a building to be removed from the Register, findings must be made which demonstrate that a building does not meet any of the following designation criteria listed in the Interim Ordinance:

- a. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in the City's past; or
- b. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history; or
- c. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; or
- d. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information in prehistory or history.

Register of Historical Resources

The Register is comprised of 94 buildings. These buildings were previously identified in several City lists and publications which contained descriptions, pictures and histories of the buildings and their occupants. These earlier lists and publications were researched and compiled by several groups and individuals, including members of the Mountain View Pioneer and Historical Association, the Community Development Department, the City Historian, the City's Historical Librarian and citizen volunteers. In April 2002, the Council acted to include these previously identified resources into one Register of Historical Resources that would accompany the Interim Ordinance. When it was adopted, the Register was intended to be an initial City list of historical resources, and it was noted that additions or deletions could be made to the Register through the HP permit process.

Applicant Request

As noted in the Initial Study, the applicant submitted a letter dated January 3, 2003 from architect John Northway, Stoecker & Northway, Inc., and a letter from attorney Lawrence Klein dated January 3, 2003, which describe the architecture and history, respectively, of the home at 696 California Street. Mr. Northway and Mr. Klein state in their letters that the home does not meet any of the criteria set forth in the National Register of Historic Places and should therefore be removed from the City's Register of Historical Resources.

Mr. Northway noted in his letter that the home did not embody distinctive characteristics. He noted that the home was probably built by a local carpenter and that the home's style was similar to other small residential structures built during this time period. He stated that the band of shaped shingles at the eave line and the palladian vents in the dormer are not unique for this time period. He also states that the front and back porches were enclosed after the

home was constructed and that the original chimney was destroyed during the 1989 earthquake.

The applicant has also submitted a more recent letter to the City stating their reasons for requesting removal from the City's Register of Historical Resources (Attachment 2). Additionally, the applicant has submitted an \$869,143 cost estimate to renovate the residence (Attachment 8). Staff has reviewed this estimate and notes that it is for a complete renovation of the residence, including a significant and detailed amount of structural and cosmetic work.

Designation Criteria

City staff and Carey & Company, an architectural firm specializing in historic preservation, evaluated the request to remove this home from the City's Register against the designation criteria listed in the Interim Ordinance. Based on this research, it appears that the home meets Criterion C of the Interim Ordinance:

CRITERION C: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.

Carey & Company prepared an historical assessment report of the home in May 2003 (Attachment 3). The report noted that the home did not appear to possess sufficient historic significance for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Places. However, the report stated that the home appeared to be eligible for the City's Register of Historical Resources under Criterion C ("distinctive characteristics of a type, region, etc.") of the designation criteria listed in the Interim Ordinance. The report noted that the home is "an excellent, intact example of an early 20th Century transitional Queen Anne/craftsman-style home" with the following distinctive architectural characteristics: pyramidal hipped roof; gable dormers with flared eaves; overlapping patterned shingles at gable ends and upper wall surfaces; projecting bay windows; Ionic colonettes at the sunporch; wood double-hung windows, some with diamond-pane multi-lites; and small multi-pane windows flanking the brick chimney.

The report also states that the home is in good to fair condition and retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical association and architectural distinction; that its location and setting are intact; and that the design, materials and workmanship of the home are only partially compromised. The evaluation further notes that the home's most prominent alteration, an enclosed corner porch, is fairly sensitive to the original design of the home and could be easily reversed.

Environmental Issues

The request to remove this home from the City's Register of Historical Resources could have a potential significant impact on the environment. If removed from the Register, there are no existing City provisions to prohibit demolition of the home. If Council chooses to approve the Historic Preservation Permit to remove the single-family home at 696 California Street from the City's Register, then staff recommends the following mitigation measure, as noted in the Initial Study:

Any redevelopment of this property shall include the existing historical resource (i.e., the single-family home) in the proposed site plan. Any new buildings or parking developed at this site, or any plan that relocates this house on-site or to another City-approved site, shall be compatible with the existing historical resource in terms of site location and orientation, architectural design, colors and materials. Any proposed exterior changes to this resource or redevelopment of this site requires an Historic Preservation Permit and shall be reviewed by the appropriate review body as noted in Section V (Administration) of the Downtown Precise Plan. **(MITIGATION MEASURE)**

Zoning Administrator Hearing

On May 14, 2003, the Zoning Administrator held a public hearing on this item. One member of the public spoke at the hearing (Attachment 5). She commented that the home is well-maintained as a rental property and that the Interim Ordinance should provide more incentives for owners of historic buildings.

CONCLUSION

The single-family home at 696 California Street appears to meet Criterion C of the designation criteria listed in the Interim Urgency Ordinance for Preservation of Historical Resources and, therefore, should not be removed from the City's Register of Historical Resources. Staff recommends that the City Council deny the Historic Preservation Permit to remove this home from the City's Register of Historical Resources.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the request to remove the resource from the City's Register of Historical Resources, finding that the single-family home at 696 California Street does not meet any of the designation criteria listed in the Interim Urgency Ordinance for Preservation of Historical Resources, and adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

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2. Approve the request to remove the resource from the City's Register of Historical Resources, finding that the single-family home at 696 California Street does not meet any of the designation criteria listed in the Interim Urgency Ordinance for Preservation of Historical Resources, and adopt modified mitigation measures as part of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting, noticed in the local newspaper and mailed to all property owners within 300' of the subject property.

Prepared by:

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Associate Planner

Approved by:

Whitney McNair
Zoning Administrator

Elaine Costello
Community Development Director

Kevin C. Duggan
City Manager

MA/6/CAM
891-09-02-03M^

- Attachments:
1. Location Map
 2. Property Owner Letter Requesting Removal from the City's Register
 3. Carey & Company Architectural Evaluation of 696 California Street
 4. Photos of 696 California Street
 5. May 28, 2003 Zoning Administrator Hearing Minutes

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6. Resolution Denying the Request for an Historic Preservation Permit to Remove the Single-Family Home at 696 California Street from the City's Register of Historical Resources
7. Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
8. Supplemental Applicant Submittal—August 2003

cc: Spencer Family Trust
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Ms. Suzette Spencer
646 Church Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

Mr. Nick Perry and Ms. Alison Hicks
Mountain View Preservation Alliance
(Fax and/or CDD will call pickup)

Ms. Paulette Spencer
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CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW
RESOLUTION NO.
SERIES 2003

A RESOLUTION DENYING AN HISTORIC PRESERVATION PERMIT
TO REMOVE A SINGLE-FAMILY HOME AT 696 CALIFORNIA STREET
FROM THE CITY'S REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

WHEREAS, an application was received from Paulette Spencer, agent for the Spencer Family Trust, for an Historic Preservation Permit to remove a single-family home at 696 California Street from the City's Register of Historic Resources (Application No. 072-03-HP); and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Administrator held a public hearing on May 28, 2003 on said application and recommended that the City Council deny the Historic Preservation Permit subject to the findings contained in the Findings Report, attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, on September 2, 2003, the City Council held a public hearing on said application and received and considered all evidence presented at said hearing, including the Findings Report and staff report from the Zoning Administrator; and

WHEREAS, staff has determined that the denial of this application will not have a significant impact on the environment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council hereby finds and determines that the denial of this application to remove a single-family home at 696 California Street from the City's Register of Historical Resources will not have a significant impact on the environment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council that the denial of said application is consistent with the General Plan and the Interim Urgency Ordinance for Preservation of Historic Resources.

TIME FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW:

The time within which judicial review of this document must be sought is governed by California Code of Procedure, Section 1094.6, as established by Resolution No. 13850, adopted by the City Council on August 9, 1983.

891-06-24-03R-E^